

HELPING BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE WORKPLACE:
A GUIDE TO STIMULATING SAFETY ADVICE,
WARNINGS OF POTENTIAL DANGERS, AND
SPEEDY RESPONSES TO EMERGENCIES.

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the helping process and the decisions that need to be made by individuals if they are to offer help in the form of safety advice, warnings and action during emergencies. While such help is often expected and may reduce injuries, it is not always forthcoming. Research as to what factors stimulate the likelihood of helping behaviour occurring is presented and applied to the workplace. This publication may be used as a guidebook for safety professionals and associations and joint health and safety committees in developing workplace programs that encourage such helping behaviours as safety advice, warnings and appropriate actions in emergencies.

INTRODUCTION

Workers can protect each other from injury both on and off the job by offering help in the form of safety advice, warnings of potential danger or speedy responses to emergencies. While such help is often expected, both well publicized news events and experimental research have demonstrated that it may not be forthcoming, even emergency situations. In fact, as a result of a series of highly publicized events, one U.S. legislature has put into effect a new law requiring witnesses to aid anyone in grave physical danger. demands that bystanders' offer whatever help they can reasonably provide without endangering themselves. Failure to do so may result in misdemeanor charges and a fine. Bystanders are also open to a civil lawsuit by the victim. Several other legislatures are debating similar bills (Newsweek, 1983).

Are "Good Samaritan" laws necessary? Why do bystanders hesitate or fail to offer help? Many may assume that reasonably responsible individuals would provide some form of help and that only calloused, insensitive people would hesitate or fail to respond. Interviews with bystanders to several well reported incidents in which help was not offered demonstrated this assumption to be simplistic. In most cases, bystanders were horrified by what they saw but could not account for their behaviour. Sparked by the testimony of such bystanders, researchers began studying altruism, i.e. helping behaviour, and what conditions or factors moderate the likelihood that individuals will offer help in a particular situation.

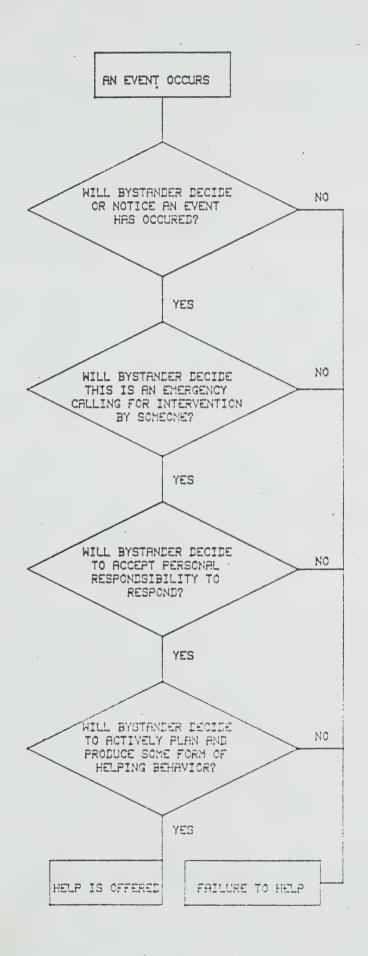
The intent of this paper is to review those factors that have been demonstrated to influence helping behaviour and to relate them to the workplace. This review provides a number of ideas that, when applied, can promote a safer, more cooperative and productive work environment. Co-workers' safety advice, warnings and speedy responses to emergencies

can improve safety by reducing both the frequency and the severity of accidents. Factors that stimulate helping behaviour also foster other forms of co-operative behaviour within the workplace. The stimulation of more co-operative attitudes among co-workers should yield a very positive impact upon worker productivity as well as safety. This publication has been designed as a Guidebook to be used by safety professionals and associations and by joint health and safety committees in developing related programs within the workplace.

DECISION-STEP MODELS OF HELPING

Theoretical models of helping behaviour have been developed that provide various analyses of bystanders' reactions to situations in which their intervention (in the form of advice, warnings or physical response) may be called for in order to help others. Such models are of value in explaining behaviour and guiding discussion, safety programs and research.

These models represent bystanders as being faced with a series of problem solving tasks in the form of decisions that must be made before help is offered. They suggest that prior to offering some form of aid, a bystander must make a sequence of interpretations and decisions resolving these Although decision-step models problems. of behaviour vary somewhat in the literature (Latane Darley, 1968, 1970, 1976; Middlebrook, 1980; Schwartz, 1975, 1971), the following four steps or decisions are common to them: (1) a hazard or event must be noticed; (2) the hazard or event must be interpreted as a potential danger or an emergency situation requiring intervention by someone; bystander must decide to accept a personal responsibility to respond; and (4) the intervention must be produced (Harvey, planned and 1979 unpublished) (see Figure 1).





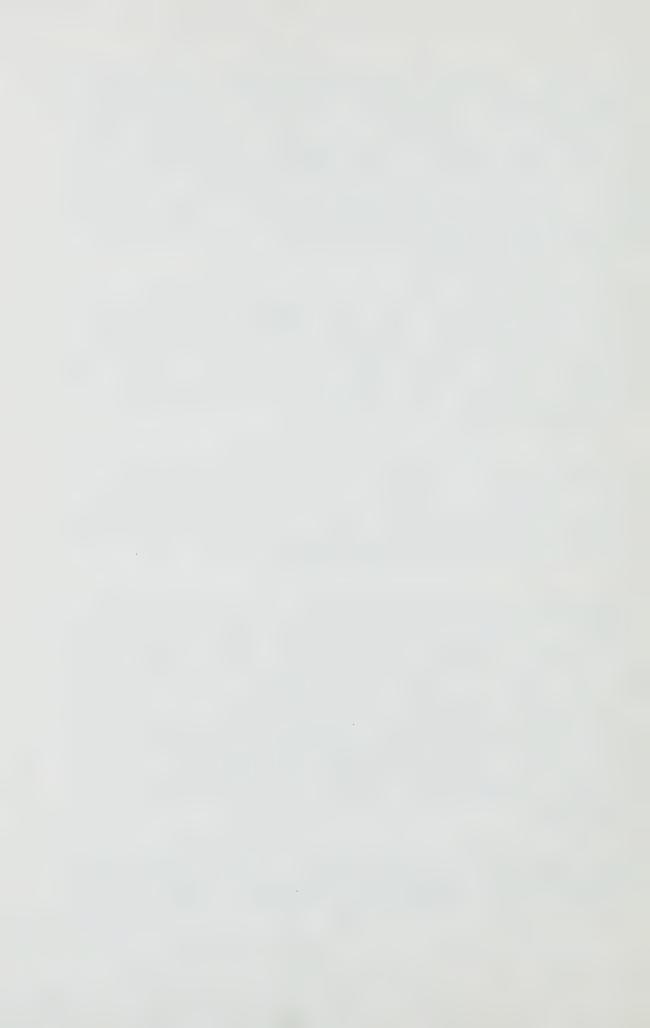
These basic steps can each be broken down to more precise questions within a particular workplace or circumstance. For example, in completing the last of these four steps, planning and producing helping behaviour, the bystander must select an appropriate type of helping response, decide how best to intervene and, perhaps, decide whether or not offering help will be too costly (e.g. physically dangerous) (Harvey, 1979 unpublished).

Situations in which helping may be required often place considerable demands upon the interpretive and decision making skills of the bystander. For example, emergency situations, tend to be exceptional, sudden, urgent and demanding. Each of these characteristics can contribute to a co-worker's failure to help.

Emergencies are exceptional in that they are rare and unusual events, and, usually, an appropriate response is not known or not well learned. Since a well practised response is usually unavailable, helping responses to the emergency need to be actively planned and executed.

Emergencies are sudden, at least from the point of view of a bystander. Usually, a bystander's attention is drawn to an event that is already in progress. The precipitating causes may no longer be apparent but must be inferred by the bystander for a complete understanding of what occurred. For example, to know whether a person lying on the ground is injured, ill or sleeping it must be clear how the person arrived at a particular place and position. Often a bystander's attention is drawn too late to obtain this information.

Emergencies tend to be *urgent* in that they require relatively quick actions from bystanders. Often there is



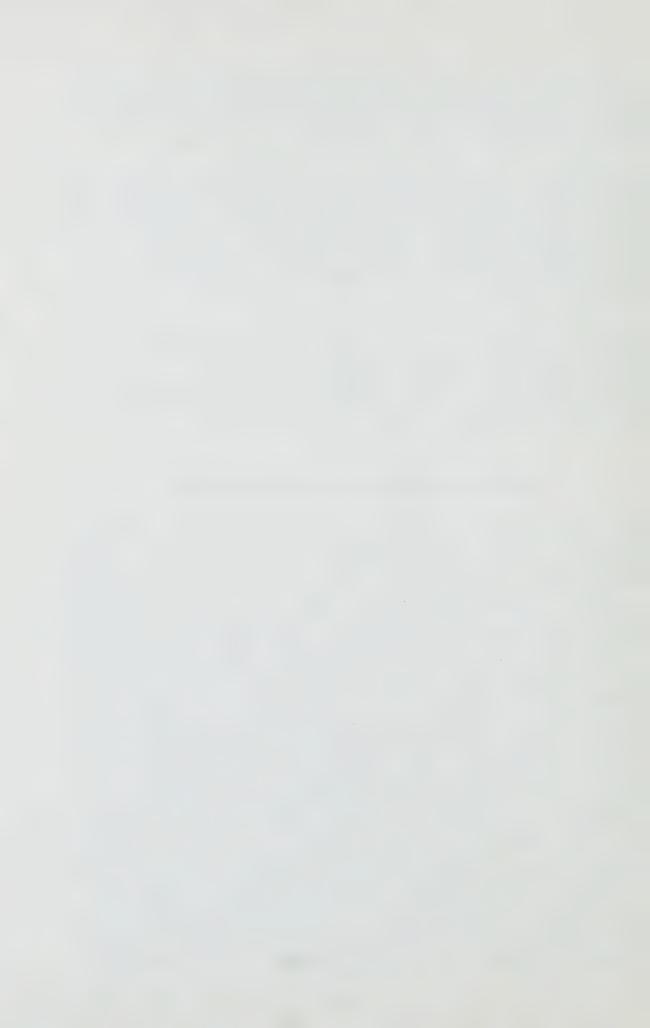
little time or no second chance for the bystander to intervene. The bystanders' initial responses will determine the success or failure of the helping act.

Emergencies are demanding in that, while they are potentially harmful to the victim or victims, bystanders may only be endangered if they attempt to help or do not flee the danger. Under some circumstances bystanders must consider their own welfare as well as the welfare of victims (Trivers, 1971).

Not all potential helping situations are emergencies. Many non-emergency situations, however, have these and other characteristics that may interfere with the interpretations and decisions involved when a bystander's help is required.

FACTORS INFLUENCING HELPING BEHAVIOUR

The factors that have been found to influence helping are mainly informational cues behaviour that bystanders' interpretations and decisions in the helping These informational cues may originate from the physical and social environment of the bystanders. The most obvious informational cues are physical cues, such as visual and auditory stimuli, usually associated with accidents or hazardous situations. However, there are also social cues, i.e. information gained from observing or interacting with others. These social cues take on added significance as the clarity of physical cues diminishes. Physical and social cues can also impact the likelihood of offering help by altering: the perceived costs and rewards to the bystander for the behaviour; the salience of certain cultural expectancies or norms; and the subjective state of the bystander. The general influence of physical and social cues will be presented first. Specific social and physical cues will be viewed from three perspectives (Middlebrook, 1980): Cost-Benefit Analysis, Norms Analysis and Analysis of



Subjective States. These perspectives help explain how a potential helper's perception may be altered by environmental cues.

Physical Cues

As may be expected, helping responses increase as more physical cues are available to bystanders. In one study only 30 per cent of subjects offered help when they only heard sounds indicating a fall but could not see or hear someone who supposedly had fallen. However when subjects were able to hear the subsequent moaning and groaning of the victim, 100 per cent of subjects helped (Clark and Word, 1972). Similarly, the helping responses of bystanders who had witnessed an individual fall at a distance were increased from 29 per cent to 81 per cent after they heard a cry for help (Yakimovich and Saltz, 1971).

Since the likelihood of detecting any signal or cue is usually dependent on the strength of the signal relative to background noise, it is not surprising to find that noise, clutter or disorganization within a worksite play a role in determining bystanders' responses. People are less likely to help others within environments that are either noisy (Mathews and Cannon, 1975) or cluttered and unpleasant (Sherrod, Armstrong, Hewitt, Madonia, Speno, and Taruya, 1977).

Rates of helping behaviour within the workplace may be increased by providing a more positive physical environment, particularly one with minimal noise or visibility impediments. these impediments are reduced, the As a potential helping situation likelihood of detecting increases, as does a co-worker's motivation to offer help. In non-emergency situations, hearing protection devices that interfere with normal communications would reduce the likelihood of safety warnings and advice being offered. Where noise cannot be reduced, policies should be designed



to ensure that health and safety information is passed on. This may be accomplished by formal briefing or by the development of non-auditory cues, such as hand signals.

Social Cues

When physical cues concerning an event are not available or are ambiguous, people often look to each other both for some indication of what is happening and for guidance on the Latane and Darley (1969) were the appropriate response. first to examine how bystanders' reactions to potential helping situations are influenced by social factors. They found that the number of bystanders present influences the chance that helping will occur. Perhaps the best known incident reported by Latane and Darley is the stabbing death of Catherine Genovese in New York City. What was striking about this tragic event was that at least 38 of her neighbours came to their windows at 3:00 a.m. in response to her screams of terror, but remained at their windows watching in helpless fascination for the 30 minutes it took her attacker to kill her. Not one of these people came to help her. No one even made an effort to phone the police. While many people argue or would like to believe that such a lack of helping behaviour could only happen in a place like New York City, laboratory studies have demonstrated that, under the right conditions, this failure to help could happen anywhere. These studies have repeatedly demonstrated what is known as the "Bystander Effect", i.e. people are much less likely to help in an emergency when they are with others than when they are alone. For example, when subjects in an experiment heard the staged distress calls of a woman in another room following a loud crash, 70 per cent of the subjects who were alone tried to help, but only 40 per cent of those who were with another person did so (Latane and Rodin, 1969).

The presence of other people may influence a bystander's interpretations and decisions within at least two steps of



the helping process. Many bystanders tend to look to the reactions of others in order to find an appropriate interpretation of events. Basing one's interpretation of events on others' reactions to emergency or potential emergency situations often results in a common error. our society people are trained not to overreact, to "play it cool". To avoid embarrassment, no one wants to be the first to appear upset or to act in a foolish or inappropriate manner. Thus the presence of others may inhibit one's own expression of concern. By basing their interpretations on the usually muted reaction of others, bystanders may define the situation as less critical than they would if they were Each bystander is then less likely to take action until someone, somehow, clearly indicates that the situation is a serious one. Secondly, even though a bystander may decide that a given event is an emergency or a hazardous situation, the presence of others may influence the decision of whether personal responsibility for action will taken. When alone, one understands that if one does not help, there is no one else to assume responsibility. others are present there is a diffusion of responsibility for helping.

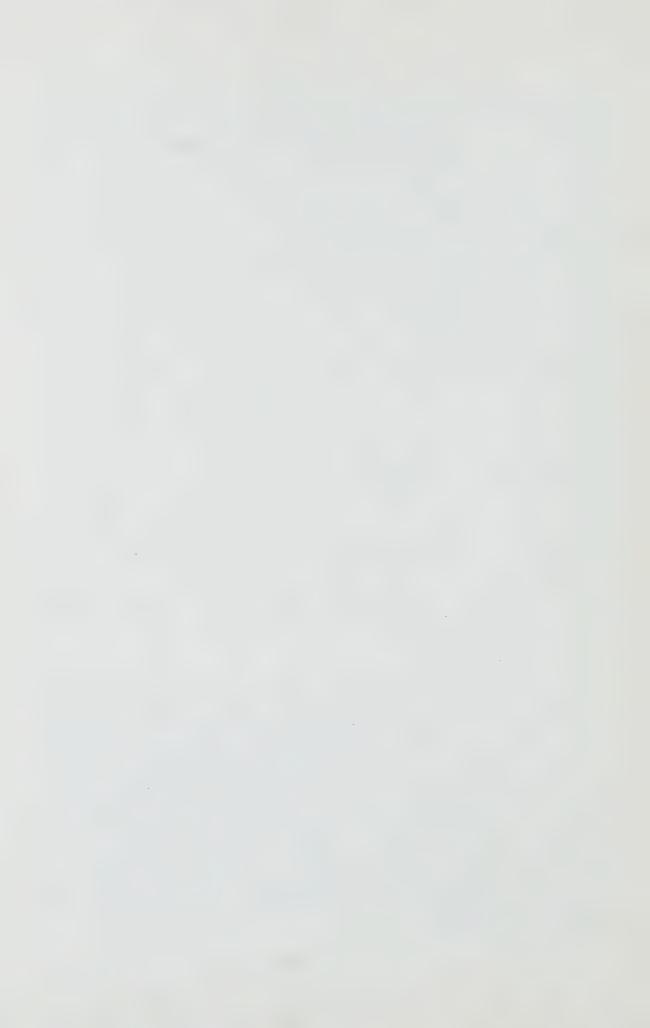
The extent to which the above explanations account for the behaviour of those who did not help in "the lady-in-distress" experiment (Latane and Rodin, 1969) was assessed during interviews that followed the study. Of those who did not help, 59 per cent said they were unsure about what had happened; 46 per cent were unsure, but decided the situation was not too serious; 25 per cent of the subjects reported that they thought other people would or could help, so they themselves were not responsible.

Overcoming the bystander effect. A number of studies have demonstrated that steps can be taken to not only counteract the bystander effect, but to reverse it. These steps can be readily applied to the workplace.



Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin (1969) measured the average speed of helping responses to a staged emergency, i.e. a man collapsing in a New York City subway. When there were clear physical cues to the nature of the emergency, responses were faster when the group size was larger. Here, bystanders were able to clearly see the person collapse (i.e., the need for help); they could also see what others were or were not doing. As a result of this information, individuals could not ignore or deny the problem nor the consequences of not taking action themselves. Similarly, it has been shown that when other bystanders show clear concern, the incidence of helping increases (Wilson, 1976). Bystanders' demonstration of concern identifies a situation as serious and demanding a well, several studies have As shown bystanders are more likely to help if their responsibility is clearly defined to them (Moriarty, 1975). For example, the likelihood of helping will increase if one is told helping is part of their job or if one can see that only he/she can help. If others are present, sufficiently near an emergency to be of assistance, the bystander who can help will be more likely to do (Bickman, 1971). Furthermore, helping will be more likely if people are aware of what procedures to follow (Schwartz and Clausen, 1970).

In summary, the above research suggests workers will be more likely to offer help if: (1) rather than relying on social cues, they can directly monitor the safety of co-workers visually, orally or via a distress signalling system that is suitable to the environment; (2) they are encouraged not to hide their concerns about a hazardous or a potential emergency situation; (3) there is prior agreement about responsibilities regarding safety advice, warnings and actions in emergencies; and (4) all workers are aware of emergency procedures (e.g. location and operation of emergency equipment).



HOW PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL CUES INFLUENCE OFFERS OF HELP

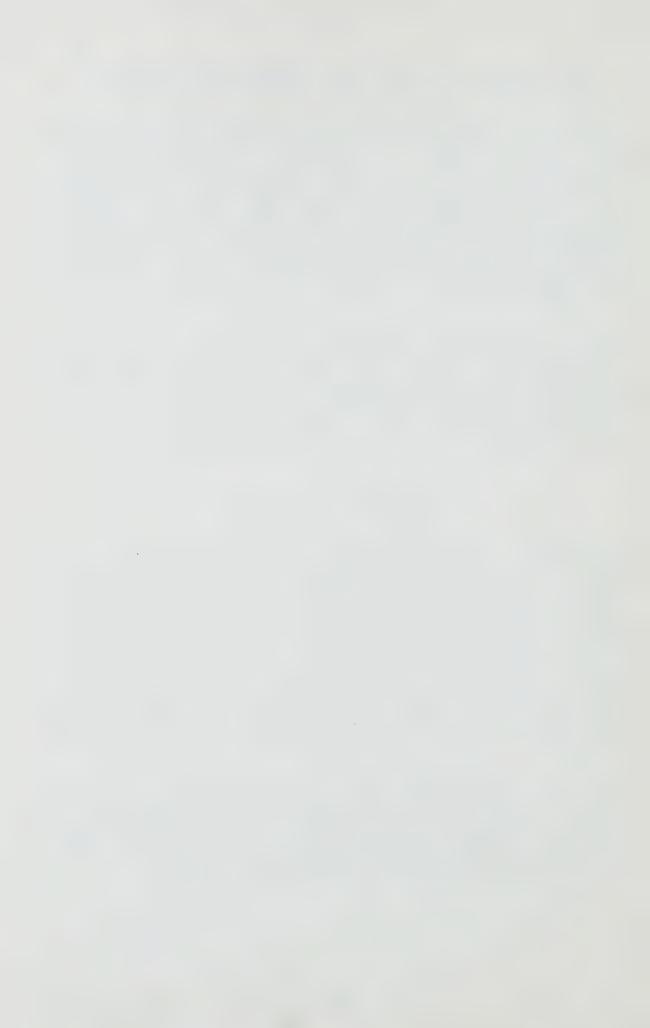
There are at least three ways in which physical and social cues can influence a bystander's helping behaviour (Middlebrook, 1980). They can: provide information about the costs and benefits (e.g. financial, physical, social) associated with offering various forms of help; provide information about related social expectancies or norms; and influence subjective states (e.g. moods, feelings, attitudes).

Included within the following sections are the types of questions that should be generated within particular workplaces to stimulate helping. It is hoped that the information provided within each section will induce all those concerned to ask these and similar questions.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost-Benefit analysis assumes that the likelihood of a particular action occurring depends on the various costs and rewards involved. Simply, the more the rewards outweigh the costs, the more likely it is that helping behaviour will occur. Any increase in the "pay off" for the bystander would be expected to increase the likelihood of help being offered. This approach provides the most reliable predictor of whether helping will or will not occur in a specific situation.

Costs and rewards refer not only to financial or material losses or gains, but more generally to all negative and positive outcomes that result from a line of action. These outcomes may be financial, physical and/or social.



Increased Costs

Financial and physical costs

Have <u>all</u> costs, not just financial ones, associated with various forms of helping been considered and minimized?

Are workers assured that they will not be penalized for taking the time to help?

As would be expected, offers of help were found to decrease as direct financial cost or physical danger increased. When a variety of requests for help were made to pedestrians, the percentage of help declined as the types of request either increased risks or financial loss (Latane and Darley, 1970). Not all costs, however, are so direct. For example, in the workplace time is often as valuable as money. Time taken away from getting a job completed on schedule has a cost associated with it for both workers and their employers.

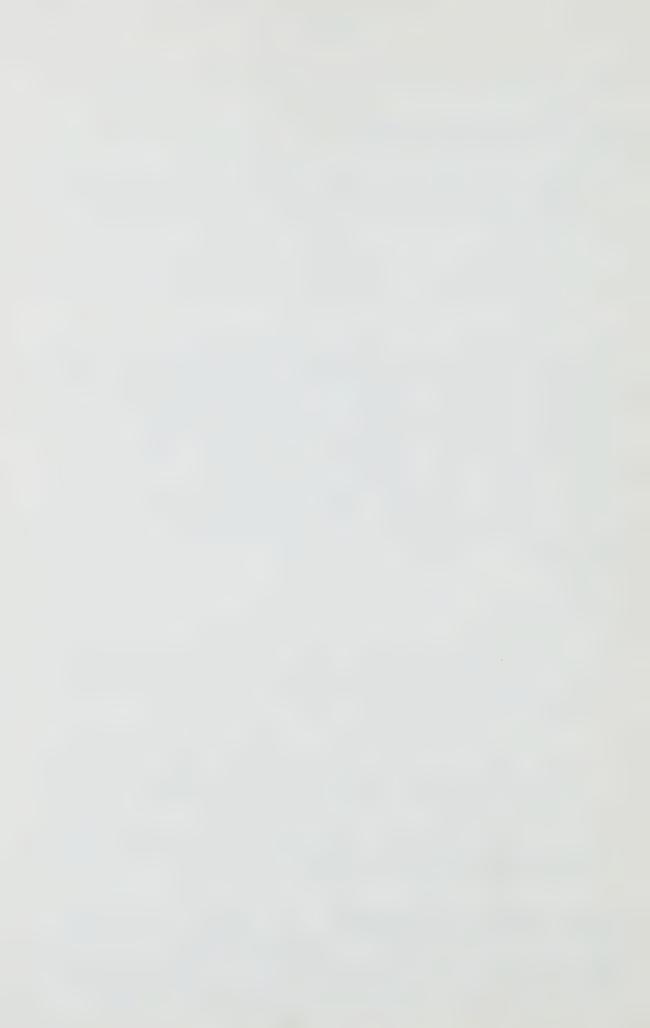
Time pressures

Are there means by which workers are reminded to keep a perspective on health and safety even when caught up in the pressure of getting a job done?

Are there means by which workers are instructed, reminded and encouraged to watch for potential emergency situations when under time pressure?

Are workers reminded, even under time pressures, that time spent helping is valuable?

Notwithstanding the expression, "If you want something done ask a busy person", there is evidence that the more time pressure people are under, the less likely they are to spend time helping another person. For example, when a number of



seminary students were late for their own presentations on "The Good Samaritan", they failed to heed the message they were about to present. They ignored the coughing and groaning of a man slumped in a doorway, and some, literally, stepped over him so that they would not face the embarrassment of being late (Darley and Batson, 1973). Within the workplace, time pressures may similarly reduce the probability of safety warnings and advice being offered and may also reduce offers of help in emergencies.

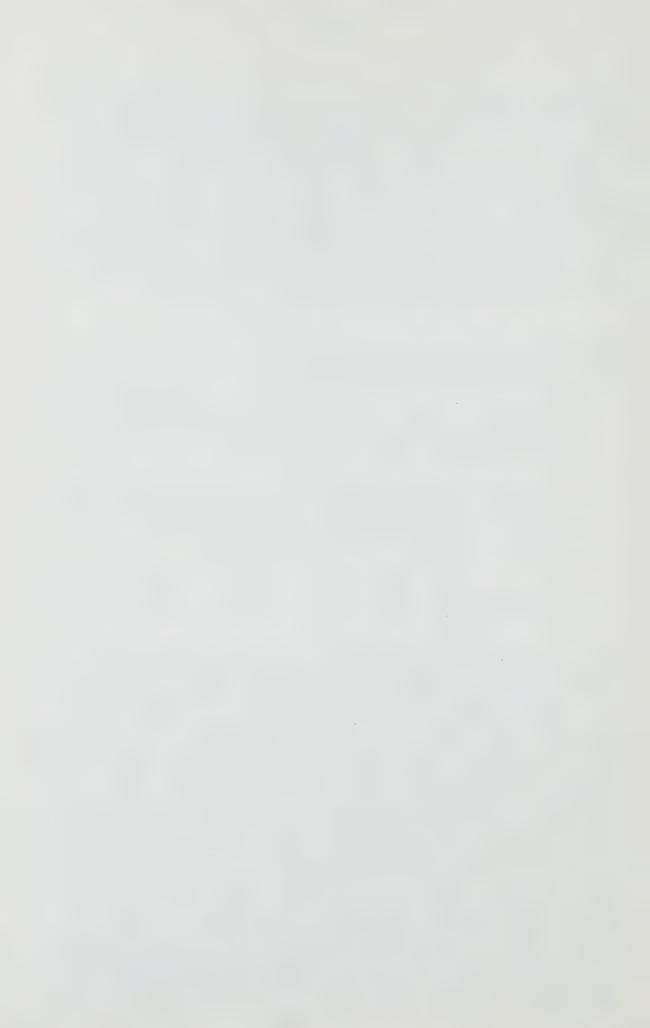
Unfamiliar environments or equipment

Are employees that are new to a particular work environment trained to express their concerns over potential dangers that they identify?

Is there a formal method of stimulating workers that are new to a particular workplace to provide their fresh perspectives on health and safety?

How can such comments be elicited with minimal embarrassment?

The less familiar one is with a particular environment or piece of equipment the greater the chance that offering help will lead to embarrassing consequences and, perhaps, some loss of social status. A new employee may wish to offer help, but may not know what to do or where appropriate equipment or services are located. The new employee's efforts may also be perceived by more experienced co-workers as unnecessary. The perceived costs of appearing foolish and/or inept may deter helping behaviour. For example, there is some correlational evidence indicating that the more familiar people are with an environment the more readily they respond to an emergency (Granet, unpublished, cited in Darley and Latane, 1970). Further, familiarity with an occupational setting has been found to influence the reporting of severe hazards. The results of one study



showed that fewer than 30 per cent of employees with less than three months' tenure reported hazards they judged to be "great" or "sizable". This is dramatically less than the nearly 70 per cent rate for reporting such hazards by workers with between five and ten years' experience on the job (cited in Frenkel, Priest and Asford, 1980). Workers within a new environment should be encouraged to indicate any concerns they have so that potential dangers are not ignored.

Potential aggression

Are all workers trained to accept advice from others as an essential part of the job rather than as an insult or threat?

If a co-worker does feel annoyed by the helping of others, is there a formal channel by which this problem can be resolved appropriately?

Are employees trained to provide advice in a diplomatic manner?

Are there diplomatic or non-threatening, even humorous techniques available to provide safety advice and warnings?

When offering help, particularly in correcting another person (i.e. offering safety advice or warnings), there is a potential for danger, embarrassment and/or humiliation. This is especially true if an individual who is being corrected has a history of responding to such acts with aggression. As shown by one study (Milgram, 1970), someone known to have either insulted or physically threatened another person is not likely to have help offered to them. Labour and management efforts can help overcome this type of problem by providing reminders of why such help should be



received with a positive attitude. One company dealt with this sort of problem by providing amusing cards that could be anonymously left by co-workers. The message on these cards pointed out to workers that they had done something contrary to proper health or safety procedures. By receiving this card, the recipient is made aware that co-workers saw what was done, disapproved and cared enough to take this action.

Inappropriate and modest contributions

Rather than obligate workers to provide co-workers with more help than they are willing or able to provide, are there appropriate resources available to which they may direct co-workers?

Are there means by which all workers are aware of these resources?

Is there clear direction to all workers that all concerns regarding health and safety are legitimate and should be voiced to appropriate co-workers, managers, safety personnel or joint health and safety committee representatives?

Is it clear that all comments regarding health and safety will be given serious consideration?

Workers who may be willing to offer some brief safety advice or warnings may not do so if they feel that these actions may lead to a greater commitment than they are prepared to accept. Organizations can take steps to avoid such situations. For example, workers' responsibilities may be to direct their co-workers to appropriate resource persons or materials.

Another cost involved in helping can be embarrassment over providing only a small amount of help. At times, the importance of some safety messages may not be clear or may appear insignificant to a worker, particularly when other



dangers or getting the job done seem more important. worker may be embarrassed to provide related advice or warnings to other workers. Small contributions can be especially embarrassing when help is solicited and a worker does not feel fully qualified to help. This problem can be overcome in the workplace. It has been shown that when appeals for assistance make it clear that even the smallest amount of help is of value, there is a greater chance that help will be elicited. When solicitors for a national health organization added the phrase "even a penny will help" to their standard appeal the number of contributors increased from 29 per cent of those approached to 50 per It is interesting to note that the average size of contributions did not decline so that the "even-a-penny" appeal yielded 67 per cent more money than the standard appeal (Cialdini and Schroder, 1976). These findings suggest that it is important to remind all workers regularly that every health and safety suggestion is of value.

Dangerous or noxious exposure

Are workers made aware of the limits of danger associated with various noxious exposures that might be associated with a rescue effort?

Are there appropriate safety procedures and training to ensure that a helper is minimally exposed to any noxious or dangerous situation?

Are there channels or methods of communication available so that safety advice and warnings can be communicated without the helper being exposed? Do all workers know how to use them?

By offering help during an emergency one may often be required to get involved in a dangerous or aversive situation. A number of studies have shown that help is less likely to be offered as the consequences of doing so become



less pleasant (Piliavin et al., 1969). People were less likely to offer assistance to a person who appeared dirty and smelly. Similarly, workers would be less likely to offer assistance if, in order to do so, they must place themselves at risk or be exposed to dirty, noisy or otherwise noxious environments. Potential help may be inhibited if a worker, under the stress of the moment, happens to focus on such noxious stimulation. To minimize this type of problem, efforts should be made to ensure that procedures necessary for offering help minimize not only the danger to potential helpers but also, when possible, noxious or unpleasant consequences.

Increased Rewards

Financial and material rewards

Are social, financial and material rewards available for offering help?

Have workers been made aware of these rewards?

Are rewards introduced so as not to <u>interfere</u> with the helping process?

Rewards, like costs, may vary from financial and material to more intangible benefits. They generally tend to increase the likelihood of helping. There are cases, however, in which financial or material rewards for help may interfere with helping behaviour. Adding external rewards to tasks that already have intrinsic rewards may change the nature of the task. If a potential helper begins to focus on such rewards, this may result in frustration and irritation. A worker may enjoy teaching a new employee how to do a new However, if there is a financial or material reward for the worker contingent upon the new employee reaching a certain level of ability, any slow progress may cause frustration, irritation and a strain in their relationship. Experiments have shown that the promise of a



reward for doing something that one is already interested in can result in decreased interest and lowered competence (Garbarino, 1975). Although various rewards for offering help may be of value in some situations, they are likely to be a hindrance in other situations. Each organization must carefully evaluate the effects of offering such rewards.

Winning the approval of others

Is appreciation of helping behaviour clearly demonstrated?

Is there a mechanism by which such appreciation can be demonstrated by a valued source such as the chief executive officer (e.g. an official recognition of approval perhaps contributing towards monetary gain or promotion)?

Social reinforcement or the admiration and approval of others is a powerful incentive for all behaviour, including offering help. Being appreciated or receiving positive reactions from others has been reported to motivate many people involved in helping activities. The impact of such approval will vary according to its source. For example, the approval of a superior who could influence a worker's future, friends or other respected individuals would have greater impact than approval from an anonymous source. Within an organization the chief executive officer's approval will likely have the greatest impact upon the stimulation of helping behaviour.

Avoiding the disapproval of others

Is it explicit and accepted by everyone within the workplace that offering help is a standard of behaviour expected of all?



Is there a forum where workers can review situations in which help was hesitant or not offered and where they can discuss how to ensure that appropriate and timely help will be given in the future?

There is evidence that helping behaviour can be prompted by attempts to avoid the disapproval of others, especially those who are able to observe our actions (Satow, 1975). When it is clear that everyone within a workplace expects safety advice, warnings or help in an emergency, then failure to provide them will have negative social consequences. Helping may result from a desire to avoid such consequences.

Gaining friendship

Is there a means by which workers are reminded that "old friends" and experienced colleagues still can benefit from safety advice and warnings?

Are there means by which friendship and a sense of camaraderie can be encouraged at the workplace?

Is all important health and safety information <u>formally</u> communicated to all employees?

Are less popular employees attended to by supervisors to ensure formal and informal safety information is communicated to them?

Are reasons for unpopularity able to be resolved?

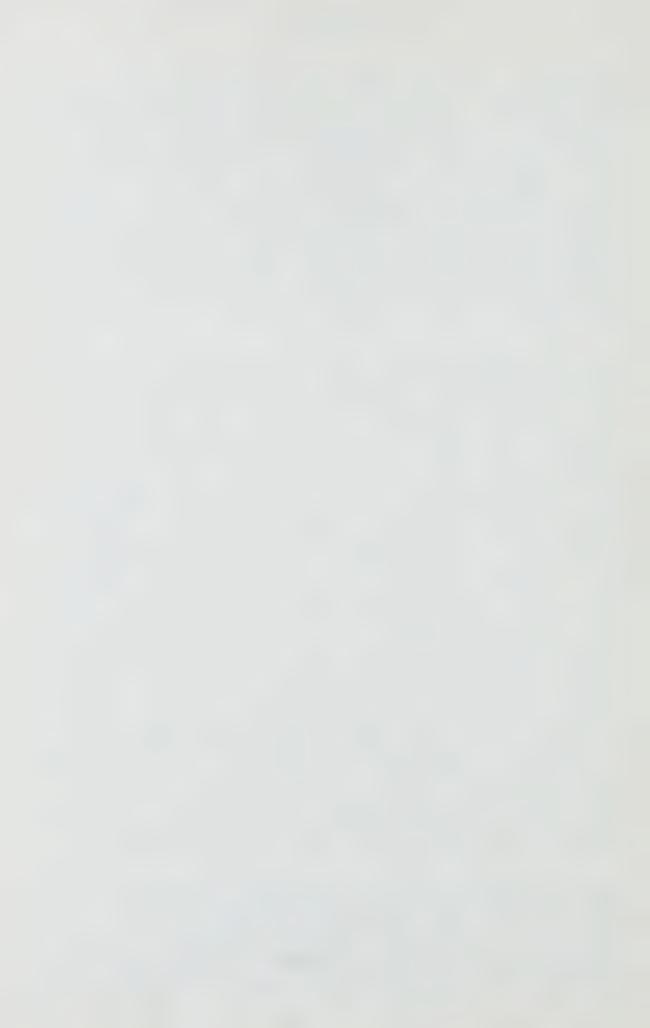
There is clear evidence that in a given situation the incidence of helping increases with the liking of the individual involved (Davis, Rainey and Brock, 1976). It is usually expected that people will offer help more readily to friends rather than to strangers or to people they dislike. However, this rule does not hold in all



situations. At times people may offer more help to a stranger than a friend in an attempt to gain a new friendship. In one study young children were found to ignore an established friendship to gain a new one (Wright, 1942). When questioned, these children expressed the idea that one incident of helping or not helping would not likely influence an existing friendship much, but would have more benefit within a new relationship. Workers may need to be reminded from time to time that their "old friends" and colleagues may need help, warnings or advice as much as the new worker.

Generally, people are more willing to help people whom they perceive as similar to themselves (Chierco, Rosa and Kayson, 1982; Colaizzi, Williams and Kayson, 1984; Mockus Schneider, 1974; West, 1975). For example, people are more likely to be offered help if they are perceived compatriots (Feldman, 1968); similar in social attitudes (Sole, Marton and Hornstein, 1975), having similar interests and personality (Karylowski, 1976); or sharing a similar negative fate, i.e. the same problems (Dovidio and Morris, These friendships may simply reflect that people tend to like others who are similar to themselves and that they may want to improve their relationship by helping. However, it is also likely that people are often most sensitive to their own problems and so it is easier to feel sympathy for others with similar problems. As well, people may feel there is less chance of being embarrassed or hurt by someone who is like themselves (Middlebrook, 1980). This suggests that helping will be stimulated if a spirit of teamwork is created on the job: workers are provided with common goals to work towards, and they are given an opportunity to communicate and discover their commonalities.

The more physically attractive a person is the more likely that that person will receive help (Benson, Karabenick and Lerner, 1976). There are several explanations for this finding. One study found that physically attractive people are liked more and therefore are helped more (Kleck and



Rubenstein, 1975). It may also be that people who are physically attractive tend to draw more attention and more empathy for their problem. It is important that managers, safety personnel, etc., do not assume that the less popular employees have received the attention, warnings or advice necessary for proper health and safety. Not everyone will benefit equally from informal communications; therefore, formal communications should never be neglected.

Avoiding an upsetting situation

Are there programs to remind workers of the negative impact of accidents not only upon those directly injured, but also upon the general morale of the workplace?

Are there means by which workers are reminded of all the ramifications (physical, social, familial, economic, etc.) that follow an accident?

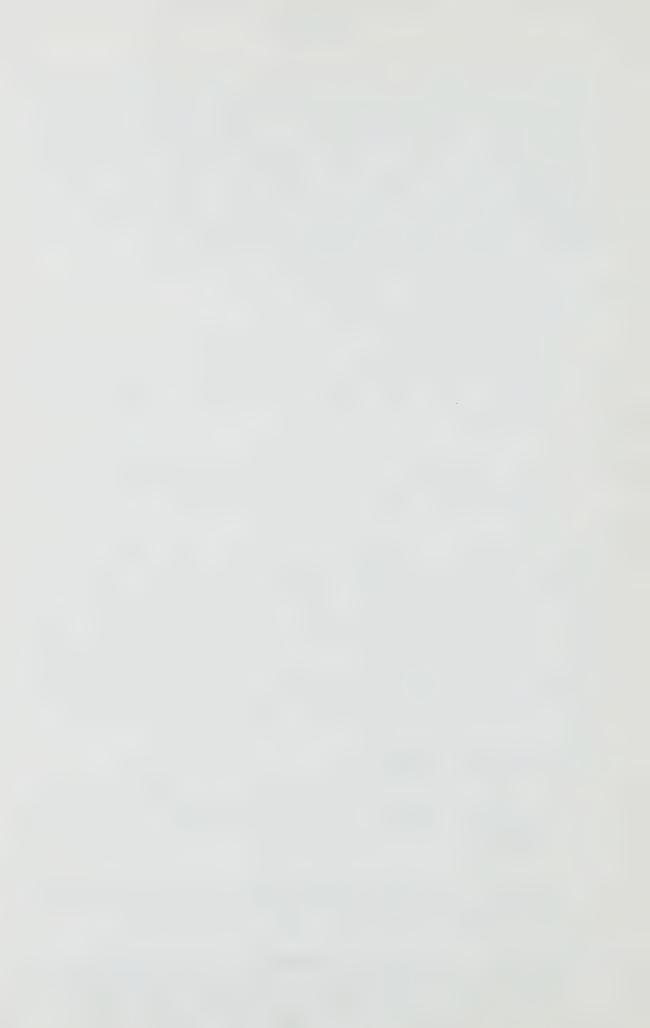
Another source of reward for offering help may be the prevention of a potentially upsetting situation. The act of helping another person to avoid an accident may be motivated by a desire to protect oneself as well as to avoid seeing other persons in distress. It may be of use to remind people of all the physical, social and familial and economic ramifications that can follow an accident (Konecni, 1972).

A meaningful contribution

Is the importance or value of helping behaviour examined, discussed and communicated within the workplace?

Has the value of previous help been fully recognized and communicated to all staff?

Are there means by which workers are reminded of the meaningful contribution they can make to each other, as well as to improved productivity, by helping?



Are suggestions from workers regarding health and safety acted upon quickly by management so that workers can see the value of offering help? If not, are the workers told why?

Helping can provide people with a feeling that they can make a meaningful contribution to others. The greater the impact helping can have on others, the more likely helping will occur. For example, when a larger sum of money was dropped by an individual she was helped faster than when a smaller sum was dropped (Chierco, Rosa and Kayson, 1982; Newman, 1977).

Often, employees do not achieve a sense of meaning from their jobs or they feel alienated from them, i.e. like a small cog in a large machine. Alienated workers often feel their actions have little or no meaningful impact upon others. Providing help for others can improve a worker's feelings about his or her sense of personal effectiveness. Reminding workers of their opportunity to help protect each other can help to make their respective situations more meaningful to them.

There is evidence to suggest that when workers report a problem and then see no ensuing changes, they will be more likely to treat future problems with indifference (Lincoln and Levinger, 1972). Managers who fail to respond to safety concerns of their staff can quickly discourage future voicing of other concerns. Similarly workers who appear not to appreciate safety advice or warnings of co-workers are less likely to receive such help in the future.

Norms Analysis

Norms analysis provides an understanding of general tendencies to offer help, given the perceived social rules operating within a situation. Two widely held social rules or norms in our society are the Social Responsibility Norm, i.e. "People should help those who depend upon them and need



their assistance" and the Reciprocity Norm, i.e. "People should help those who have helped them." The degree to which either of these two norms may influence helping behaviour in a given situation has been shown to depend on a number of factors.

The Social Responsibility Norm

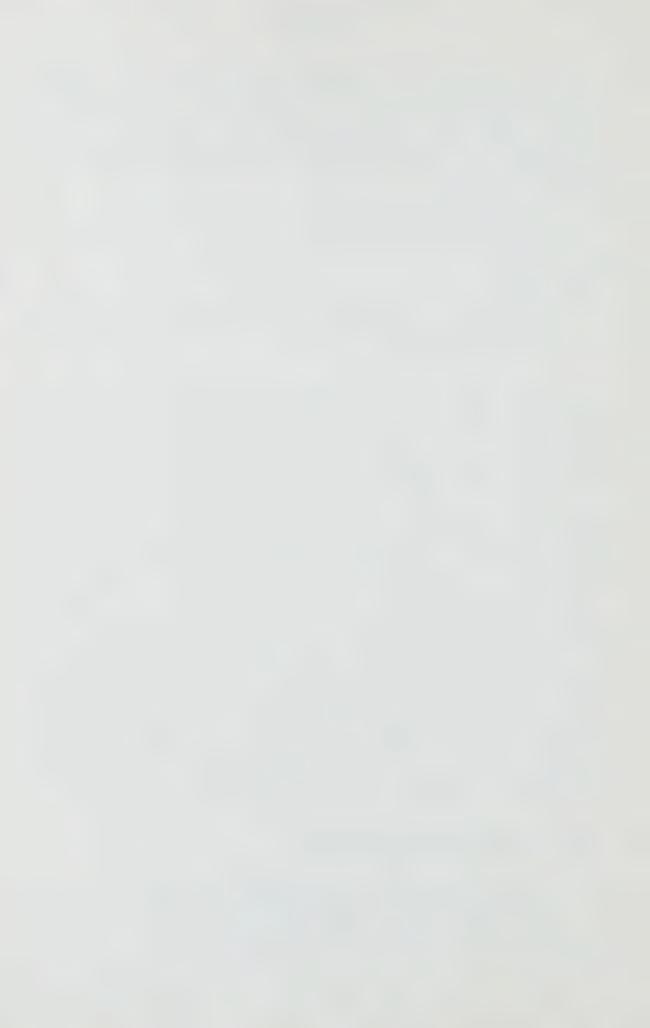
Self-respect

Does the work environment allow workers to feel good about themselves?

It is an ideal in our society that people should help others. People will help others even when there is immediate or clear expectation of benefit to themselves. one study, when workers were told their supervisor would win a prize if they performed well, their performance was better than that of workers who were told their performance had nothing to do with their supervisor's chances of winning a prize (Berkowitz and Daniels, 1963). These employees worked harder for their supervisor even though they believed that their supervisor would not learn of this help for several weeks after their short-term contract job was completed. an occupational setting where employee self-respect encouraged, the desire to maintain this self-respect should act to stimulate both helping behaviour and productivity. Organizational actions likely to encourage employee selfrespect, such as effective health and safety policies, provision of quality of worklife circles, and humanistic management practices, can yield these benefits.

Perceived role appropriateness

Are there means by which workers are advised that they are expected to provide each other with appropriate forms of help as a part of the job?

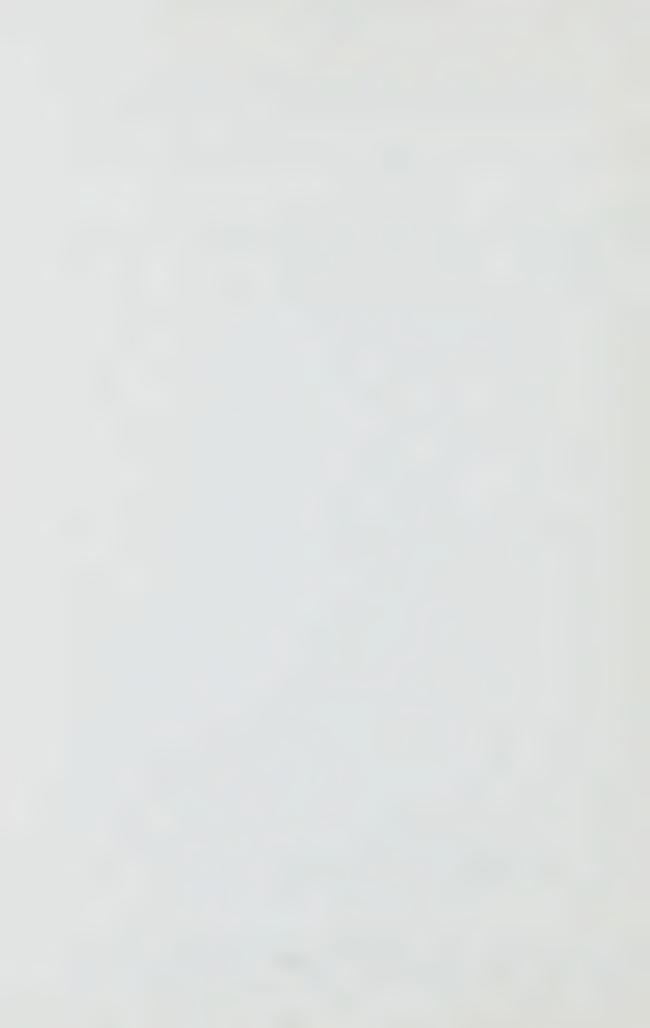


Are all workers trained to feel comfortable about, accept and appreciate their role in offering help?

Are all workers trained in the skills needed to provide help?

The likelihood that a worker will offer help to a co-worker dependent upon both the perceptions of the relationship between the workers and of the role appropriateness of the type of help required. There are studies that demonstrate that males more often help women than men, likely because males perceive it more their role to offer help to females (Colaizzi, Williams and Kayson, 1984; Feinman, 1978; Gruder and Cook, 1971; Milgram, 1970). Several studies have demonstrated that the skills required in helping should be seen by bystanders appropriate to the helper's perceived role (Katzev and Averill, 1984; Latane and Dabbs, 1975; Staub, 1978). Males are more likely to help when the skills required are perceived as congruent with the masculine role (e.g. heavy lifting tasks). Females are more likely to help when the skills required are perceived as congruent with the female role (e.g. provision of emotional support). More generally, workers may feel that helping, particularly offering safety advice or warnings, is inappropriate when directed towards a more experienced, skilled, older or higher ranked, However, there is some evidence to suggest that worker. when individuals are trained in helping skills, such as first aid, they are more likely to overcome such concerns and offer assistance (Heinold, reported in Fergus, 1982). Such training likely provides a worker with both the skills and the confidence to assume the role of helper. Training in a variety of helping skills would likely help workers to assume more confidence in their general ability to provide useful safety advice or warnings to any co-worker.

While it may be of value to provide workers with the necessary skills and confidence to offer help, there are other factors related to role appropriateness that



organizations should deal with in terms of clearly delineated policies. For example, a supervisor may withhold safety advice or warnings from a worker who is not directly under his or her authority so as not to interfere with the established chain of command. A worker may assume that only health and safety personnel should offer safety advice or warnings or that one should not disrupt their own or other's work to offer such help.

Cause of dependency

Are workers encouraged to give advice and warnings to others they see as acting recklessly and foolishly within the workplace?

Do managers take appropriate action in situations where a particular worker is viewed as reckless or foolish by others?

Are all instances of reckless or foolish behaviour eliminated from the workplace?

While social responsibility norms dictate that we should help those who are dependent upon us, there are, of course, clear limits to the extent to which dependency may elicit Several studies have shown the apparent cause of the dependency to be an important factor in determining whether others will help. As previously discussed, when individuals perceive others as victims of circumstances, they exhibit increased rates of altruism (Bryan Davenport, 1968). However, the more the victim is perceived as responsible for his or her plight, the less inclined people are to exhibit altruistic behaviour (Berkowitz, 1968). It should not be assumed that a worker who is known to act in a reckless manner or perhaps, work under the influence of alcohol will receive necessary advice, warnings or help. In such cases managers' should be aware of their need to take responsibility for action rather than rely on assistance from co-workers.



Degree of need versus coercion

Are workers encouraged rather than ordered to offer help?

Are workers trained in how to ask for help diplomatically without appearing to coerce their co-workers?

When the dependency is clearly beyond a victim's control, the degree of helping behaviour tends to reflect the degree of need; the greater the need the greater the incidence of helping (Chierco, Rose and Kayson 1982; Colaizzi, Williams and Kayson, 1984; Newman, 1977; West and Brown, 1975). This relationship, however, may be reversed if requests for help appear as a coercion. People are willing to help those who appear most in need, but over-emphasizing such need can lead to a boomerang effect. It has been shown that generally, people offer to help less often when they feel pressured to help (Horowitz, 1968; Fraser and Fujitomi, 1972). Thus, within the workplace, orders to help may also have little impact or even a negative impact.

Reminders of responsibility and good examples

Are examples of helping made public?

Are the reminders used relevant to the workplace and the workers involved?

Reminding people of their general social responsibilities by direct verbal appeals, posters or even by reading religious writing has been shown to increase the occurrence of helping (Paulhus, Shaffer and Downing, 1977). Another effective method of reminding people of their social responsibilities is by example or modelling. Thus, those within the workplace who first offer help in the form of warnings, advice or actions will increase the likelihood of others making similar offers in the future.



The impact of reminders tends to be limited by the degree to which these reminders appear relevant within a potential helping situation. As well, the more alike potential helpers and/or helping situations are to previously viewed helpers and/or situations, the more likely that the observed helping behaviours would be used as guides for action.

The Reciprocity Norm

A number of experimental studies have demonstrated that people tend to help those who have helped them in the past. In one such study workers did more work for their supervisors after the supervisors had voluntarily helped them. These workers increased their production even though they did not expect to see the supervisor again (Goranson and Berkowitz, 1966). Other studies have even shown that once a person has received help from one person, they are more willing to help a third person (Berkowitz and Daniels, 1964).

Helping another person does not always result in reciprocity, and can, in fact, result in hostility and resentment. For example, if a co-worker or supervisor who is generally viewed as very competitive suddenly becomes co-operative and helpful, people may become suspicious of that behaviour (Schopler, 1970).

Predicting reciprocity is often a very complex matter. A number of factors have been shown to determine the extent to which previous offers of help result in reciprocity.

The quantity and quality of past help determine the extent to which help will be repaid (Bar-Tal, 1976). If a person has received a lot of help, they try to help when they can; if their problems were ignored, this will be repaid with indifference (Wilke and Lanzetta, 1970). Within the workplace, managers should attempt to ensure that effective help is available when it is needed.



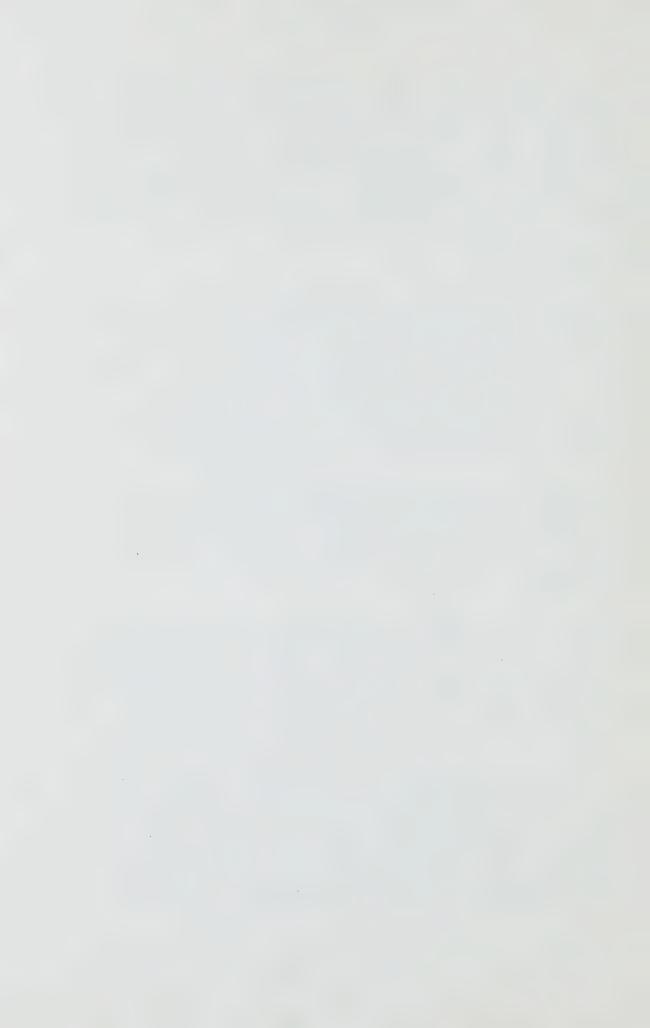
It has been found that people were more likely to reciprocate a favour that they had requested rather than one that had been offered or imposed on them (Saxe and Greenberg, 1974). A manager may find that unsolicited aid may appear as interference or as being imposed upon workers. In situations where workers already feel imposed upon, such helping efforts by managers may just add to the problem.

Co-workers, supervisors or management should never make offers of help that they do not keep. Help that is promised and never delivered was shown to result in resentment in others and reduced their willingness to help (Morris, 1972). A favour that is neither the result of an earlier promise nor expected because of a personal relationship is more effective in stimulating a desire to return the favour.

When roles or working relationships are clearly defined, as for example the supervisor-worker relationship, any help offered may be attributed to the role or job. When one goes beyond his or her role to help, this may not always be understood.

People are more likely to reciprocate help that appears to be deliberate or intentional rather than accidental (Greenberg and Frisch, 1972). As well, the greater the perceived sacrifice of the helper, the greater the reciprocity (Gergen, Ellsworth, Maslach and Seipel, 1975).

The more a favour obligates a recipient, the more likely it is to cause irritation, not gratitude (Brehm and Cole, 1966). When someone helps and then makes a big point of reminding the recipient about it, this can lead to resentment and an unwillingness to return the favour. As well, people do not like to be considered charity cases.



Subjective States: Situational influences

Analysis of Subjective State reviews how factors believed to influence various moods and feelings within a sitution influence helping behaviour. Internal subjective states, such as moods, feelings and attitudes have been discussed to some extent in relation to Cost-Benefit Analysis and Norms Analysis. However, there are other, more general, subjective states that can play a significant role in determining the occurrence of helping behaviour.

Since a person's moods and feelings are not directly observable to investigators, research in this area is based upon the study of measurable differences in situations that influence helping. It is inferred that these different situations influence attitudes or subjective states. While these inferences may, at times, be questioned, the results of such research may be used to help understand how a number of situational factors may influence the chance that helping behaviour will occur.

A number of studies have been conducted to evaluate the relationship between positive or negative moods and altruism. Several of these studies attempted to manipulate mood by having "good things" happen or not happen to subjects, and then subsequent rates of altruism in a given situation were compared. In general, it appears that happy people are the most likely to help. People who are in a negative mood tend to be less predictable in their willingness to help others (Middlebrook, 1980).

Are there means by which workers are trained and reminded to accept responsibility for everyone's health and safety?

People tend more often to help others for whose ill fate they feel responsible (e.g. injuries (Carlsmith and Gross, 1969). The more workers are made to feel responsible for each other's safety, the more likely they are to offer each other help.



Are there formal means by which workers are made aware of the intrinsic dangers and work pressures that their coworkers are under?

Do workers have a way of knowing when their co-workers might need social support as well as a more "watchful" eye kept on them as a result of problems at work or off the job?

It has been found that when events cause a potential helper to become emotionally involved in the plight of others, they are more likely to offer help (Konecni, 1972). If workers have an opportunity to understand their co-workers' problems, they may be more able to understand why they should offer help.

Are employees trained and reminded of the serious consequences to all employees of any unsafe act?

Another reason people may help those who are or may be injured is to maintain their belief in a fair and just world (Lerner, Miller and Holmes, 1976). It is disturbing to see someone suffer who has done nothing to deserve punishment. This threatens a belief in a fair world and may stimulate a desire to try to correct a wrong by helping. However, in the desire to maintain a belief in the world as a fair place, people may try to find justification for another's fate. Under certain conditions there is a tendency to put down or evaluate negatively a victim or potential victim (Brock and Buss, 1962; Cialdini et al., 1976; Lincoln and Levinger, 1972). Also to maintain feelings of a just world, workers may ignore or minimize the seriousness of unsafe acts of co-workers, particularly friends or other "liked" workers. Workers may do this because they feel serious harm should not happen to these people. should be trained or reminded of the serious consequences to all employees of any unsafe acts.

Individuals will help more when they feel that a situation is fair to themselves as well as to the person they are



helping. In one study it was only when individuals were being paid a fair wage for their work that they offered more help to a person in need than they did to one who was not as much in need (Miller, 1977).

SUMMARY

While help in the form of safety advice, warnings and action during emergencies is often expected and may accidents and injuries, it is not always forthcoming. Within this paper, helping behaviour is presented as the consequence of a series of decisions. Situational factors, which moderate the likelihood that helping will be offered, understood as influences upon the decisions Research into what factors involved. moderate likelihood of helping behaviour occurring was presented and applied to the workplace.

Situational factors that influence helping behaviour consist of physical and social cues, which bystanders may use to resolve possible questions that may determine their helping The likelihood of help being offered potential or actual emergencies tends to increase as the number and clarity of relevant physical and social cues available to the bystander increase. How such situational cues can be understood and used within the workplace is This paper also reviews how factors that discussed. encourage helping behaviour can be applied to the This is done from three perspectives: workplace. Benefit Analysis, Norms Analysis and Analysis of Subjective States.

The Cost-Benefit Analysis examines the negative and positive outcomes that result from offering or not offering help. These outcomes may be financial, physical or social. Any variation that increases the "pay off" for the bystander would be expected to increase the likelihood of help being offered. Conversely, any potential cost associated with offering help can act to discourage the helping behaviour.



A number of costs and benefits that influence helping behaviour are described.

Norms Analysis examines the role social expectancies play in stimulating helping behaviour. Two relevant norms reviewed here are the social responsibility norm and the reciprocity The social responsibility norm implies that people should help those who depend upon them and need their assistance. Training people in helping techniques and initiatives that encourage worker selforganizational such as effective health and safety policies, quality of working life programs and worker input into decision making, are likely to ensure greater adherence to The reciprocity norm implies people should help those who have helped them. This norm depends not only upon whether help was offered in the past but also upon the context in which the help was offered. For example, help that is offered at great sacrifice by someone is much more meaningful than help offered accidentally. Alternatively, a favour that obligates the recipient is more likely to cause irritation, not gratitude.

Analysis of Subjective States examines measurable differences in situations that have been found to influence helping. It is inferred that these different situations influence moods, feelings, attitudes and other subjective states. Subjective states that appear to influence altruism include positive and negative moods that result from good or bad things happening to a potential helper. As an example, people who are in a good mood by virtue of having had a good thing happen to them are more likely to offer help than someone in a bad mood.

The factors reviewed here can be applied to workplaces to stimulate the offering of safety advice, warnings and help in emergencies. A knowledge of each factor can be used to avoid potential problems and to develop positive programs within the workplace. While examples of how each factor can be used were presented, the exact applications of each to a workplace can best be done by individuals closely associated



with that environment. The list of factors described here is not exhaustive. Future scientific research and careful attention to particular workplaces will bring forth more factors of value to stimulate helping behaviour. It is hoped that the model of helping behaviour presented and the factors reviewed may serve as a basis for workplace programs designed to encourage helping behaviour.



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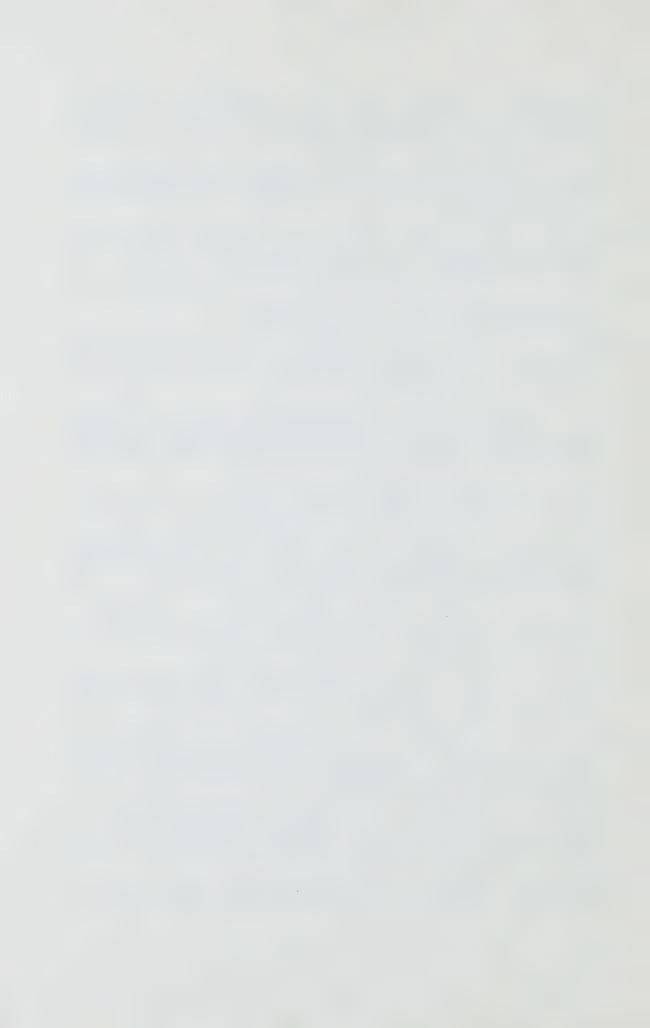
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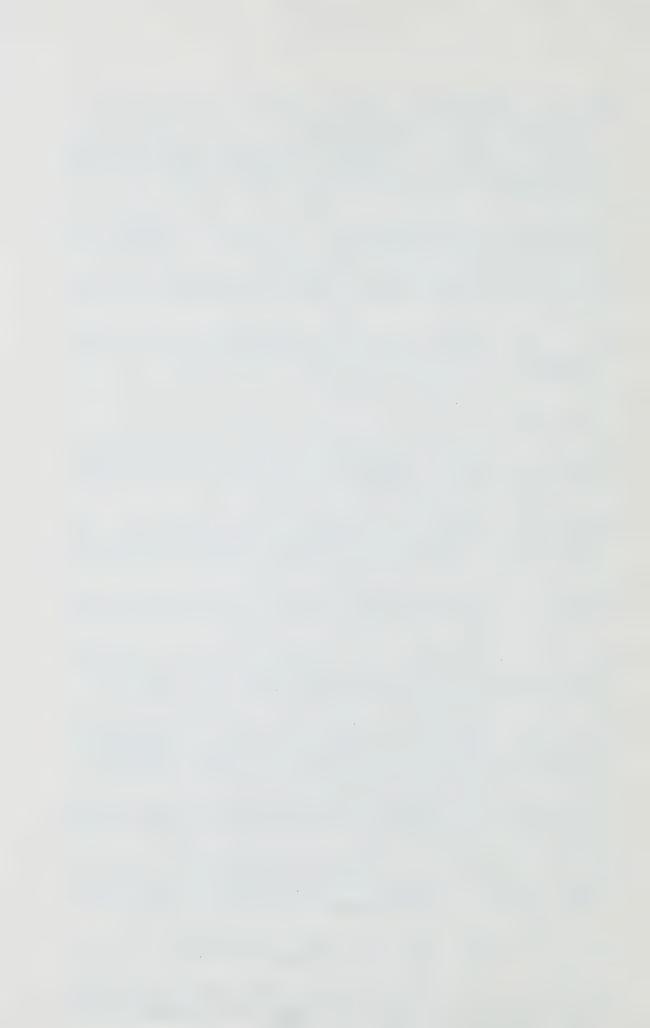
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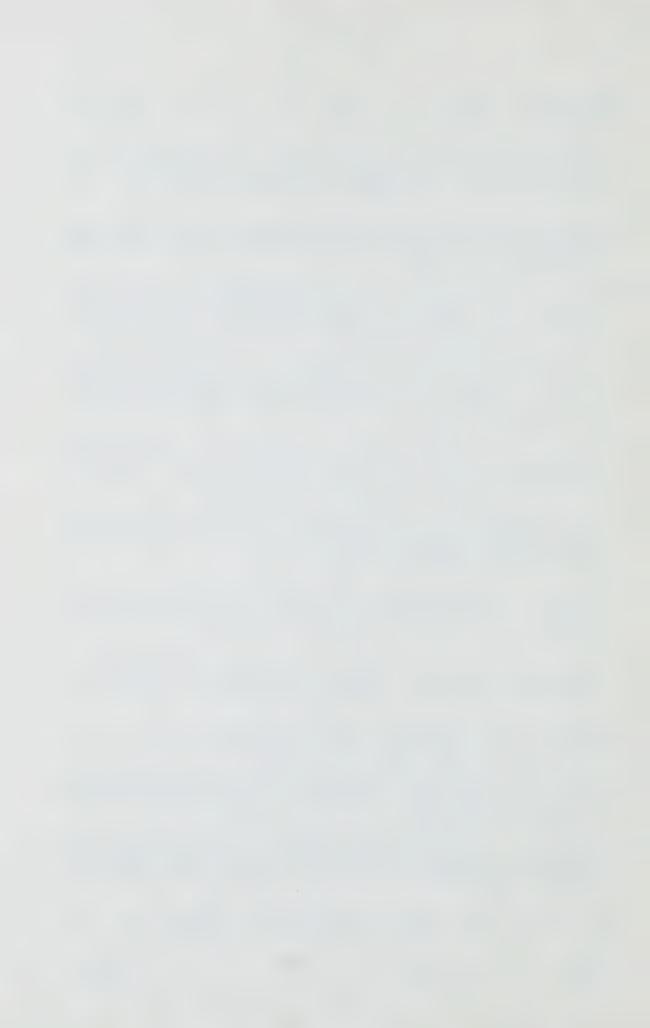
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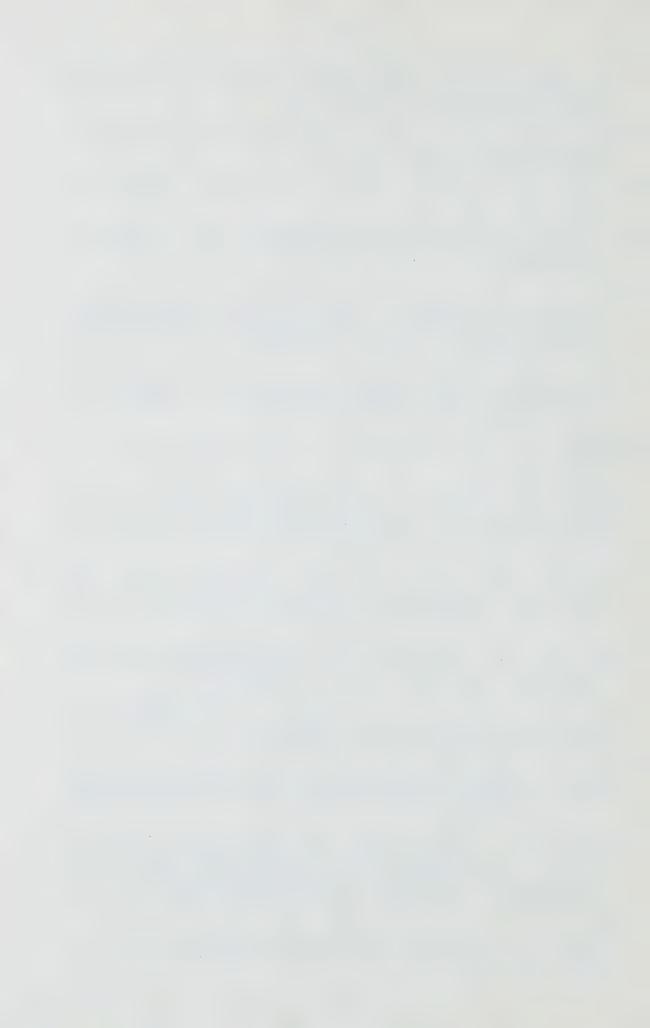
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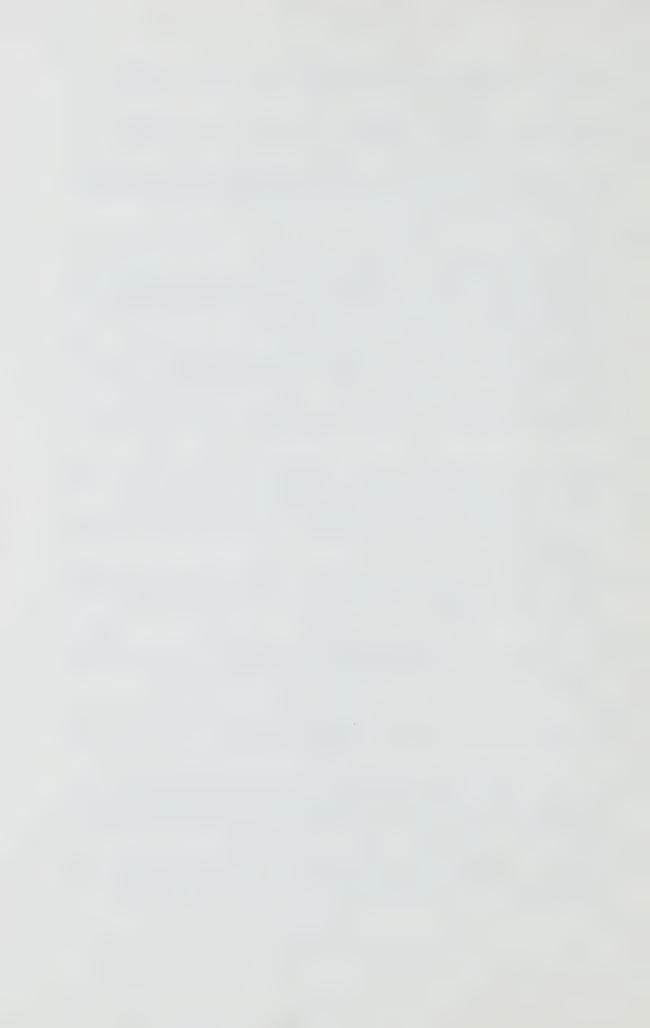


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